

**Review Questions on**  
**A SHORT LIFE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN**

BY  
 JOHN G. NICOLAY

*Chapter I.*

- I. Tell what you know of the ancestry and parentage of Abraham Lincoln.
- II. Describe the migrations of the Lincoln family.
- III. State the place and date of Abraham Lincoln's birth.
- IV. Discuss in detail the education of Lincoln. What important facts are to be gleaned from the story of his schooling?
- V. How did he differ from the average lad, brought up in the backwoods?
- VI. Describe briefly Lincoln's first opportunity of "seeing the world." What did his conduct on this journey prove?
- VII. Where did the Lincoln family next settle?

*Chapter II.*

- I. What was Lincoln's means of livelihood after he became of age?
- II. Give incidents of his life at New Salem.
- III. State the leading tenet of the Whig party at this time, and its local application to the village of New Salem.
- IV. Discuss Lincoln's letter to the "Sangamo Journal." Why is it important?
- V. Give the date of the Black Hawk War and tell what you know of Lincoln's part in it.
- VI. What was the significance of the result of the election?
- VII. What crisis did Lincoln confront at this time?
- VIII. Describe Lincoln's commercial venture. How did it effect his after-life? What soubriquet did he gain from this experience?

*Chapter III.*

- I. In what occupation did Lincoln engage after the failure of the Lincoln-Berry store?
- II. Describe Lincoln's campaign for the legislature, mentioning the date of the election and the issues involved.
- III. Why was the result of the election a turning-point in Lincoln's career?
- IV. What were the circumstances of his choice of a profession?

- V. How many times was Lincoln elected to the legislature of Illinois? How long did he hold office?
- VI. Tell what you know of the measures in which Lincoln had a share, during his legislative career.
- VII. What was the Lincoln-Stow protest? Discuss the situation in Illinois with regard to slavery.
- VIII. For what office did Lincoln become a candidate during his legislative service? With what success did he meet?

#### *Chapter IV.*

- I. Write a paragraph on Lincoln's ideals for the practice of law.
- II. Discuss political conditions in Illinois caused by Westward emigration.
- III. Mention two vocations which were avenues to distinction at this time. How were these callings affected by the increase of population?
- IV. What was Lincoln's political and social standing at this time?

#### *Chapter V.*

- I. What were the politics of the State of Illinois? Of Sangamon County? Which party did Lincoln represent?
- II. Tell the story of Lincoln's marriage, giving date.
- III. Describe the affair which lead to the Shields duel. What was the outcome?
- IV. Discuss an important change in Lincoln's business affairs.
  - (a) Why was his partnership with Stuart dissolved?
  - (b) With whom was the new partnership formed?
  - (c) What advantage had the new association over the old?
  - (d) With what ambition did the example of Stuart fire Mr. Lincoln?
- V. Tell what you know of Lincoln's efforts to secure the nomination for Congress. Who were his rivals? What was the result of his campaign? What was the date of the election?

#### *Chapter VI.*

- I. Tell what you know of the issues with which Lincoln was concerned during the first session of the Thirtieth Congress.
- II. Discuss:
  - (a) The attitude of the Whig party toward the Mexican War.
  - (b) The "Wilmot Proviso."
  - (c) Lincoln's speech in Congress on the Mexican War.
  - (d) The campaign of 1848.
- III. What was the situation in the District of Columbia with regard to slavery?
- IV. Name the provisions of the abolition bill presented to Congress by Lincoln? What was the fate of the bill?
- V. Sum up the advantages to Lincoln's career of his term of service in Congress.
- VI. What were the circumstances and outcome of Lincoln's application for the General Land Office?

### *Chapter VII.*

- I. Discuss the repeal of the Missouri compromise.
- II. Tell what you know of the State Fair and Peoria debates, reviewing Lincoln's arguments against the spread of slavery.
- III. Do you consider Lincoln's course of action in the matter of the election of Trumbull to the Senatorship in 1854 significant, and why?
- IV. Discuss the origin of the Republican party. Who were the "Know Nothings"? What was the single issue upon which party lines were drawn?
- V. Tell what you can of the election of 1856. What fortunate escape had Lincoln at this time? What momentous question was agitated during this campaign? What ground did Lincoln take upon this question?
- VI. What were Lincoln's views on the equality of men (Chicago Banquet speech)?

### *Chapter VIII.*

- I. Which party held the balance of power in 1856? Name the president.
- II. Discuss the Dred Scott decision.
- III. How did the Dred Scott decision affect Douglas's theory concerning the repeal of the Missouri Compromise? What was the "Freeport doctrine"?
- IV. Outline the arguments of Lincoln's speech on the Dred Scott decision.
- V. Give a brief history of the civil strife in Kansas.
- VI. What was the Lecompton Constitution?
- VII. What stand was taken by Douglas in relation to the frauds in Kansas?

### *Chapter IX.*

- I. How did Lincoln apply the quotation "a house divided against itself cannot stand" to the political situation?
- II. Discuss, as fully as you can, the Lincoln-Douglas debates. Define Douglas's position regarding slavery. Review his arguments. What was meant by "popular sovereignty"? How did Lincoln meet his points?
- III. What was the ultimate goal of Douglas? How had he handicapped himself (a) with the Southern leaders; (b) with President Buchanan and his supporters? How did the debates affect this ambition?
- IV. What did Douglas gain as a result of his combat with Lincoln? What did he lose? Answer these questions with relation to Lincoln.
- V. What had Lincoln to say concerning the principles of Jefferson? Concerning "popular sovereignty"?
- VI. What was Lincoln's comment on John Brown's raid?

### *Chapter X.*

- I. Tell what you can of Lincoln's Kansas speeches.
- II. Discuss fully the Cooper Institute speech, giving its text, line of argument and significance to the country at large.

- III. Describe the Democratic Convention of 1860. What was the occasion of the split in the party?
- IV. What proposition was laid down by Jefferson Davis for the pro-slavery element?
- V. Describe the Republican Convention of 1860. Mention a significant incident.
- VI. Name the pivotal States upon which the election depended. Why was Lincoln more acceptable to these States than Seward?
- VII. Sum up briefly Lincoln's career to the time of the nomination.

### *Chapter XI.*

- I. Name the four political parties engaged in the contest of 1860; their candidates for the presidency; and state the main issues of their platforms.
- II. Describe Lincoln's campaign. What use did his supporters make of his humble origin and homely appellations? How did this affect the working-classes? What inspired popular confidence in Lincoln throughout the free States? Who were the "Wide Awakes"?
- III. Mention a noteworthy feature of the letters of acceptance of all of the candidates.
- IV. What contributed to the growth of secession feeling at this time?
- V. Tell what you can of the fusion of the parties opposed to Lincoln.

### *Chapter XII.*

- I. Discuss the selection of the Cabinet.
- II. Distinguish between Lincoln's attitude toward slavery as already existing in the Southern States and his attitude toward the extension of slavery. What was meant by the "territorial question"?
- III. What was Lincoln urged to do to pacify the cotton States? How did he meet these requests?
- IV. Describe briefly the preparation of the Inaugural address.
- V. Describe the journey of the president-elect to Washington. Comment on the farewell speech at Springfield.
- VI. Cite some utterances of Lincoln at this time which foreshadowed his course of action.
- VII. Why did it become necessary to change the plans for the latter part of the journey?

### *Chapter XIII.*

- I. Comment briefly on the conduct of President Buchanan during the interval between the election and inauguration of Lincoln.
- II. Tell what you can of the formation of the Confederacy. Upon what idea was the new government based?
- III. Outline the policy of the new administration, as presented in the Inaugural address, regarding the integrity of the Union; the course to be pursued in the seceding states; the initial move in the forthcoming conflict.

- IV. How were the Confederate commissioners received at Washington?
- V. Discuss the Seward memorandum. What was the upshot of Seward's suggestion? How did Lincoln meet this incident?
- VI. Tell briefly the story of Fort Sumter.

#### *Chapter XIV.*

- I. What change in the political situation was caused by the bombardment of Fort Sumter and the President's proclamation?
- II. How did the free States answer the President's call for troops?
- III. Name the slave States which had not yet joined the Confederacy. Which of these joined forces with the secessionists?
- IV. Describe the Baltimore riot. What was the situation at Washington?
- V. How did the necessity for taking sides work out in Virginia? In Kentucky? In Missouri?
- VI. What hope of the secessionists failed because of the refusal of the border slave States to join the Confederacy?

#### *Chapter XV.*

- I. Describe the war preparations in the North. In the South.
- II. Mention certain means of strength enjoyed by the Confederacy.
- III. At what points were the Union troops concentrated? Why were these places important strategically?
- IV. What impression had been produced abroad by President Buchanan's negligence in dealing with secession? What action was taken by England? What had England and France to gain by the disruption of the Union?
- V. Discuss Secretary Seward's despatch and the President's correction. What did this incident prove?
- VI. Describe the President's labors of reorganization.
- VII. Mention the preliminary skirmishes of the war.
- VIII. State the position of the Confederate army.
- IX. What was the Union plan of attack?

#### *Chapter XVI.*

- I. Tell what you can of the proceedings of the special session of Congress.
- II. Discuss President Lincoln's views as expressed in his message, on:
  - (a) The assault on Fort Sumter.
  - (b) The lawfulness of secession.
  - (c) The intelligence of the people.
- III. What danger menaced the homes of the South?
- IV. What was Gen. Butler's dictum concerning the legal status of escaped negroes? How did the President deal with this question?
- V. Discuss the appointment of McClellan and the campaign in West Virginia. What did the result of the skirmishes mean to the Union?

- VI. Tell briefly the story of the battle of Bull Run, giving date. What did the outcome of the battle mean to the secessionists?
- VII. Outline the course of action which the President adopted after the defeat at Bull Run.
- VIII. To what command was McClellan promoted?

#### *Chapter XVII.*

- I. Indicate Gen. Scott's outline for military operations. How was the plan received by the people?
- II. What was the dominating line of military operations? Why? Indicate the three great fields of strategy according to geographical features.
- III. Discuss Fremont's promotion and plan of campaign.
- IV. Tell the story of Fremont's proclamation and Lincoln's correction.
- V. Review Lincoln's analysis of Fremont's action in his letter to Senator Browning.
- VI. Why did not the same objections which were raised to Fremont's emancipation proclamation apply to the President's proclamation of 1863?
- VII. What course of action did the President pursue with relation to Gen. Fremont?

#### *Chapter XVIII.*

- I. Review the naval operations which followed the bombardment of Fort Sumter.
- II. Discuss the Trent affair.
- III. How did Gen. McClellan conduct himself on taking command of the army of the Potomac?
- IV. Name three lines of advance which the President considered necessary to gain control of the Southern States.
- V. What plan did Lincoln recommend for Eastern Tennessee? How was the suggestion received?
- VI. How does Lincoln rank as a strategist?
- VII. What was the situation in Kentucky?
- VIII. What were Gen. Buell's instructions? How did he carry them out? What loss did the Union sustain through the insubordination of this general?
- IX. Who succeeded to the command of Gen. Fremont? What difficulties did that commander leave to his successor?

#### *Chapter XIX.*

- I. What was the outlook for the Union at the close of the year 1861?
- II. How were Gen. Buell and Gen. Halleck exercising their commands? What course did Lincoln direct? How did they respond to the President's enquiry?
- III. Sketch in a paragraph the career of U. S. Grant, prior to the Civil War.
- IV. Tell briefly the story of Fort Henry and Fort Donelson.
- V. What territory was embraced by the Department of the Missouri? Who was elevated to the command?

- VI. Describe briefly the battle of Pittsburg Landing.
- VII. Mention another Union victory.
- VIII. Tell what you can of Halleck's mistakes in the field.

### *Chapter XX.*

- I. Tell what you can of naval activities in the first half of the year 1862.
- II. Describe briefly the encounter of the Merrimac and the Monitor.
- III. What was the object of Farragut's expedition?
- IV. Describe briefly the battles of Forts Jackson and St. Philip and of the evacuation of New Orleans.
- V. Why was Farragut unable to take Vicksburg?

### *Chapter XXI.*

- I. How did Gen. McClellan fall short as a commander?
- II. Mention a change in the Cabinet.
- III. What was McClellan's plan of attack? What was the President's plan? What was the fundamental error of McClellan's theory?
- IV. Why did Lincoln permit McClellan to pursue a line of attack which he was convinced was in error?
- V. How did Lincoln reorganize the Department of the Potomac?
- VI. Discuss the evacuation of Manassas. What loss did McClellan's hesitation cost the Union?
- VII. What were McClellan's instructions? How did he carry them out?
- VIII. Review the events of the campaign of the Peninsula?
- IX. Mention some qualities popularly attributed to Lincoln. Prove the truth of them by his dealings with Gen. McClellan.

### *Chapter XXII.*

- I. Describe briefly Jackson's campaign in the Shenandoah Valley.
- II. What measures, in case of a disaster to the Army of the Potomac, were taken by the President?
- III. State the result of Lee's attack upon McClellan. What was the import of the correspondence between McClellan and the President?
- IV. What promotion was conferred upon Gen. Halleck?
- V. Upon what course of action did Lincoln and Halleck agree, with regard to the Army of the Potomac? How did McClellan carry out his orders?
- VI. What was the sentiment of the Cabinet toward McClellan?
- VII. Tell what you can of Pope's defeat and its effect upon the army. What can you say of McClellan's treatment of Pope?
- VIII. What task did the President delegate to Gen. McClellan at this time?

- IX. Discuss McClellan's pursuit of Lee's army. What opportunities did McClellan permit to slip through his fingers during his campaign?
- X. Discuss the circumstances of McClellan's removal from command.

#### *Chapter XXIII.*

- I. Relate the incident which was the cause of Secretary Cameron's resignation.
- II. What was the primary object of the Civil War, according to the President's message of Dec. 3, 1861?
- III. Discuss fully Lincoln's theory of compensated emancipation, mentioning the Delaware experiment. What were the provisions of the Joint Resolution? How was it received by Congress? By the free States? By the border slave States?
- IV. What military order was issued by Gen. David Hunter? What action did the President take upon it?
- V. Tell what you can of anti-slavery measures enacted by Congress.
- VI. Review in a paragraph the discouragements sustained by the Union cause at this time.
- VII. Discuss the President's second conference with the delegates from the border slave States.
- VIII. Why did Lincoln postpone the Emancipation Proclamation?

#### *Chapter XXIV.*

- I. Tell what you can of popular criticism of the administration at this time.
- II. Recite the substance of Lincoln's reply to Horace Greeley's Open Letter in the N. Y. Tribune. To what end was the reply designed?
- III. What was the import of the President's reply to the abolitionist deputations from the churches who urged that he free the slaves?
- IV. What victory made possible the publication of the Edict of Freedom?
- V. Discuss fully the Emancipation Proclamation.
- VI. Did the President free the slaves as a war measure or because of anti-slavery conviction? Quote from the Hedges letter to prove your answer.

#### *Chapter XXV.*

- I. Tell what you know of the enlisting of negro soldiers and the Fort Pillow massacre.
- II. What was the Order of Retaliation? How did the President regard it?
- III. Review the causes which combined to stop volunteering at the close of the year 1862.
- IV. Tell what you can about the Conscription Law and the enforcement of the draft.

- V. Discuss the draft riots in New York and the attitude of Gov. Seymour.
- VI. Discuss the Vallandigham case and Mr. Lincoln's defense of his authority in the matter.
- VII. Who were the "Knights of the Golden Circle," "Sons of Liberty" etc.? What was their purpose? What did they accomplish?
- VIII. Tell something of Confederate activities in Canada.

#### *Chapter XXVI.*

- I. Tell what you can of the character and ability of Gen. Burnside. What was the attitude of the army toward him?
- II. Describe briefly the battle of Fredericksburg, giving date.
- III. What request did the President make of Gen. Halleck at this time? How did Halleck respond?
- IV. Discuss Lincoln's letter to Gen. Hooker. What qualities of leadership did the President find in this general? For what did he merit a rebuke? In what spirit did Gen. Hooker receive the rebuke?
- V. Describe the battle of Chancellorsville, giving date. How did the result of the battle effect Gen. Hooker's prestige?
- VI. Describe Lee's second invasion.
- VII. Why was Hooker relieved of his command? Name his successor.
- VIII. Describe the battle of Gettysburg, giving date. What did this victory mean to the Union cause? What were the losses on both sides?
- IX. Discuss Lee's retreat.
- X. Mention two events associated with the battle of Gettysburg. How do the critics rank the Gettysburg address?

#### *Chapter XXVII.*

- I. Tell what you know of the campaign of Buell against Bragg. How did the Union profit by this campaign? Who was Buell's successor?
- II. Describe in detail Grant's campaign against Vicksburg.
- III. What was the turning-tide of the war?
- IV. Tell what you can of Rosecrans's pursuit of Bragg.
- V. Describe the battle of Chickamauga. Who was the hero of the day?
- VI. Why was the battle of Chattanooga especially important? Describe fully, giving date.

#### *Chapter XXVIII.*

- I. To what command did Gen. Grant succeed? What title was conferred upon him?
- II. What special service did the country expect of Grant?
- III. Outline Grant's military policy for the year 1864.
- IV. Discuss the correspondence between Lincoln and Grant.
- V. What were the numbers of Grant's army? Of Lee's army? How did the balance of gain and loss stand between the Union and Confederate causes? What was Grant's advantage? Lee's advantage?

- VI. Discuss in detail Grant's campaign against Richmond.
- VII. Describe the siege of Petersburg.
- VIII. What was "Early's Raid?"
- IX. Sketch Gen. Sheridan's operations in the Shenandoah Valley.

*Chapter XXIX.*

- I. What was the substance of Grant's instructions to Sherman? How did Sherman prepare for the struggle?
- II. Outline the three stages of Sheridan's great campaign, mentioning the decisive victories of each.
- III. What was Gen. Sherman's policy of advance at the outset? How did it work out?
- IV. Who was Gen. Johnston's successor? Describe briefly the fall of Atlanta. What did this mean to the South? What was its effect upon Northern politics?
- V. Discuss the occupation of Atlanta and Gen. Sherman's measures.
- VI. Tell what you know of the invasion of Tennessee.
- VII. Discuss fully the "March to the Sea" and the capture of Savannah.
- VIII. Discuss Sherman's progress through the Carolinas and the fall of Charleston.
- IX. What were the military results of Sherman's campaign?

*Chapter XXX.*

- I. What was Mr. Lincoln's theory of reconstruction?
- II. What helped to define Lincoln's policy?
- III. Discuss the President's circular letter to the military governors.
- IV. Tell what you can of reconstruction in Louisiana; in Arkansas; in Tennessee.
- V. What can you say of conditions in Missouri throughout the war?
- VI. Discuss emancipation in Maryland.

*Chapter XXI.*

- I. Tell what you can of the criticism of Lincoln in various quarters. To what was it due?
- II. Discuss Sec. Chase's presidential aspirations.
- III. What was the Cleveland Convention? Whom did the delegates to the Cleveland Convention nominate?
- IV. State the provisions of the platform adopted by the Republican Convention of 1864.
- V. Discuss fully the second nomination of Lincoln.
- VI. How did the Monroe doctrine come up at this time?

*Chapter XXXII.*

- I. What was the bogus proclamation? What was the effect of it? How was Secretary Stanton's course of action turned against Mr. Lincoln?
- II. Why was Congress at odds with the President?

- III. What were the provisions of the bill which brought about the Wade-Davis manifesto? What course of action did the President adopt?
- IV. Tell briefly the story of Horace Greeley's peace mission.
- V. What was the Jacques-Gilmore mission? What came of it?
- VI. Describe the Democratic Convention of 1864. Who were the nominees for President and Vice-president?
- VII. What was the substance of the "plank" proposed by Vallandigham? What would this have meant to the Union, if the Democratic party had won the election?
- VIII. What turned the tide of popular feeling?
- IX. How did Lincoln sum up the results of the election?

*Chapter XXXIII.*

- I. Discuss fully the thirteenth amendment.
- II. What did Lincoln say of peace and slavery in his message of Dec. 6, 1864?
- III. What was Blair's Mexican project?
- IV. Tell the story of the Hampton Roads conference.
- V. How was the report of the peace commissioners received at Richmond?

*Chapter XXXIV.*

- I. What was the principal concession to the radicals in the Baltimore platform?
- II. Discuss fully the changes in the Cabinet.
- III. What offer did the President propose to make to the Confederacy? How did the contemplated indemnity compare with the cost of the war? What was the sentiment of the Cabinet toward this plan?
- IV. What was Lincoln's unvarying attitude toward the South? Mention instances which prove this.
- V. Analyze the second inaugural address.
- VI. Quote some opinions on Mr. Lincoln's standing as a man of letters.

*Chapter XXXV.*

- I. Tell what you can of the depreciation of the Confederate currency.
- II. Discuss the enforcing of conscription laws in the South.
- III. How were the people of the South coming to regard the Confederate government?
- IV. To what command was Gen. Lee appointed at this time? What was the condition of his army? The military situation?
- V. Discuss Lee's letter to Grant. What action did the President take upon it?
- VI. Describe the assault on Fort Stedman.
- VII. Describe fully the battle of Five Forks. What results were accomplished by this battle?

VIII. What can you say of subsequent encounters? Of the losses to both sides? Why was this needless blood shed?

IX. Discuss fully Grant's pursuit of Lee. What can you say of the terms of the surrender?

X. Tell what you can of conditions in Richmond after Lee's surrender. Describe the President's visit.

*Chapter XXXVI.*

I. Tell what you can of the flight of Jefferson Davis and his cabinet. How did Davis regard Lee's surrender? How did his advisors and the people of the South regard it?

II. Describe Sherman's pursuit of Johnston.

III. What course was pursued by the government in relation to Sherman's terms of surrender? How did Gen. Sherman take this censure?

IV. Tell what you can of the surrender of the other Confederate forces.

V. Sketch briefly the naval engagements which wiped out the Confederate navy.

VI. What course did the government pursue with reference to Jefferson Davis?

VII. Describe the grand review of the army.

*Chapter XXXVII.*

I. Describe the celebration at Fort Sumter.

II. Tell what you can of the last Cabinet meeting. What question was uppermost in Mr. Lincoln's thoughts on the last day of his life? What was his last admonition to his Cabinet?

III. Tell what you can of the conspiracy headed by Booth.

IV. Tell the story of the assassination. Give the date.

V. Quote the words of Sec. Stanton at the death-bed of Lincoln.

VI. Describe the attack on Sec. Seward.

VII. What was the fate of the assassins?

VIII. Tell what you can of the mourning of the nation.

IX. Describe the funeral pageant.

*Chapter XXXVIII.*

Sum up, in a short essay, the character and career of Abraham Lincoln.

**FOLDOUT BLANK**